

“When teachers make parent involvement part of their regular teaching practice, parents increase their interactions with their children at home, feel more positive about their abilities to help their children in the elementary grades, and rate the teachers as better teachers overall; and students improve their attitudes and achievement” (Becker & Epstein 1982; Epstein 1986)

Purposeful Parent & School Connections

- ☐ A well planned Parent Orientation, which takes place at least twice each year, can be the catalyst for a healthy Parent & School Connection.
- ☐ A bi-monthly Parent & Principle Brown Bag Lunch can provide an avenue for contact, communication and partnership building. Some subjects can be brought out in the open and discussed, ie: rumors of fights at school, bullying, drugs, sex & text messaging, etc as well as the positive aspects of keeping the parents informed of activities and opportunities provided through their school. Sometimes the administration and the parents can solve problems together.
- ☐ Establish a “Parent Center” at the school where parents can find information about the school and ways to volunteer.

Listen to Parents, Give Support, Make it Easy to be Involved

- ☐ LISTEN: Provide ways for parents to be “heard” so they can share their concerns or address issues.
 - ☐ A parent suggestion box.
 - ☐ Parent surveys.
 - ☐ Ask parents what they want and need.
- ☐ SUPPORT: Give serious consideration to ways your school can support and help the family.
 - ☐ Offer workshops, classes and resources for parents. Promote good books about parenting.
 - ☐ Offer family activities ie: family craft night and family field trips.
 - ☐ Provide parent tips and resources so they are able to help their own children succeed in school.
 - ☐ Preparing your child for school.
 - ☐ How to help your child have a good attitude about school and learning.
 - ☐ How to help your child with homework.
 - ☐ How to help your child develop study skills for life.
 - ☐ How to help your child prepare for a test.
 - ☐ How to advocate for your child at school.
 - ☐ Getting the most out of Parent-Teacher conferences: How to have productive conversations about student progress.
 - ☐ Proven Ideas for Parents to help their children do better in school.
 - ☐ Summer activities that enhance a family learning experience.
 - ☐ Tutors and tutoring programs in your community.
 - ☐ Ways to help your child’s teacher and classroom.
 - ☐ Ways to help your child respect adults and authority.
 - ☐ Preparing your kindergartner for elementary school.
 - ☐ Preparing your elementary student for middle school.
 - ☐ Preparing your middle school student for high school.
 - ☐ Preparing your high school student for college.
 - ☐ Preparing your child for a successful future.
 - ☐ Raising responsible kids.

Listen to Parents, Give Support, Make it Easy to be Involved (continued)

- ☐ INVOLVEMENT: Provide detailed information about how parents can be involved in the school.
 - ☐ Promoting family involvement at the school will nurture positive attitudes and increase skills for parents to help their children succeed.
 - ☐ Keep parents informed. Provide at least 5 optional ways your parents can acquire information about your school and every event: ie: newsletter, email, website, bulletin board, take-home flyers, phone calls, teacher conferences, open houses, etc.
 - ☐ Help parents understand learning standards and the school curriculum.
 - ☐ Give parents opportunities to acquire and practice learning strategies they can do at home.
 - ☐ Provide opportunities for parents to visit the classroom and interact with the teacher.

Ways to Welcome and Thank Parents

- ☐ Greet parents as soon as they enter the school grounds or the building. A familiar and friendly face can make parents feel more comfortable. Several greeters are ideal for special events as parents will be arriving at the same time.
- ☐ Always call parents by name and make a point of smiling. Make friendly comments like, "I'm so glad you came!"; "It's great to see you!"
- ☐ If your school is a new setting for some parents you will want to plan ways to help them relax and feel "at home" as soon as possible. Design a "Welcome packet" for parents who are new to the school.
 - ☐ Use inclusive family friendly language.
 - ☐ Identify and praise the strength of family.
 - ☐ Praise parents as the first and most significant teacher of their children.
 - ☐ Include a campus map and a directory of the staff.
- ☐ Be aware of your own "cultural lenses". Make an effort to understand cultural differences and to be non-judgmental. Show respect and interest towards all parents.
- ☐ Post photos of parent volunteers.
- ☐ Post a monthly "Thank You" list of parent volunteers.
- ☐ Help students plan a "Parent Appreciation Day" with name tags, songs, and gifts for parents.

Parent & Staff Connections

- ☐ Hold parent and staff sporting events: volleyball, etc.
- ☐ Have parents and staff serve together on committees, task groups, etc.
- ☐ Have parents and staff preform skits together for assemblies and events.
- ☐ Have parents showcase their talents at events - ie: music, acting, art, etc.

Encourage Parents to play a Significant Role

- ☐ Have a parent write an article for the school newsletter.
- ☐ Invite parents to participate in program activities and/or field trips.
- ☐ Invite parents to help you locate resources to support program activities and grants for your school.
- ☐ Invite parents to share family traditions or help plan activities that relate to their cultural background.
- ☐ Encourage family journals with personal stories and photos that the students can bring to the classroom to share.
- ☐ Keep an on going "task list" of small jobs that parents can do if they show up to volunteer.
- ☐ Give parents resources to advocate for issues that effect their children, ie: health, child-care.